



August 1, 2019

Dear Friend,

As I speak to voters across Boston the response I get the most about the campaign we have built is excitement about the quantity & quality of the ideas being promoted. This is exciting for me because I know that I will have partners throughout the city to help take these ambitious goals from proposals to plans to policies that make Boston better.

Starting today we will be sending out weekly messages to dig a little deeper. I hope you will find these useful and informative as you talk with your friends and neighbors about why you have joined #TeamHalbert.

As you know, I believe the more we can do to connect City Hall directly to Bostonians, empowering them with information and understanding, the better the quality of government they will receive. This is why one of my first policy proposals was around bringing the weekly City Council meetings out of City Hall and into neighborhoods.

As a former City Council staffer I remember sitting in a nearly empty Council Chamber during meetings week after week. Starting by bringing Council meetings to each of the 9 districts, and ultimately expanding to a meeting in each of the city's 22 wards, we can increase the public's interest and engagement with the work of the Council – work that serves them.

Holding meetings on Wednesday afternoons at City Hall creates a real structural barrier to participation and engagement. It is good that the Council broadcasts meetings on local access and online but, as anyone in as sports-obsessed a city as ours can tell you, it's always better to see things live and in-person.

The Council can do this, in fact it already does on limited occasions with certain committee hearings, so the infrastructure is there. Bringing Council meetings to neighborhoods, in the evening, when more people can see what is going on in real-time, adds a valuable degree of access and depth to what can often feel like obscure proceedings.

Some have pushed back on this by saying the value is limited because Council meetings lack a public comment period. My answer to that is that the Council decides how its meetings will be conducted and could create an opportunity for public feedback if it so chooses.

But, even if things stay the same, the ability to speak with a Councilor immediately after a meeting and ask, face-to-face, why they supported a measure, spoke on an issue, or stayed quiet on another, rather than having those questions filtered through staff or communications channels after the fact, has value. This kind of direct engagement works to combat apathy and cynicism, 2 of the most powerful forces undermining civic engagement and feelings of agency.

If you have thoughts about this idea, questions about it, or perhaps want to make a suggestion to improve it, reach out to us at [info@davidhalbert.com](mailto:info@davidhalbert.com). I look forward to hearing from you. If you like it, make sure to share it on social media and tag the campaign account "@VoteHalbert" on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. See you next week!

- David